

## REMARKS

Applicant has amended the first paragraph under the heading “Detailed Description of the Illustrated Embodiment” on page 4 of the specification to fill in a blank that was inadvertently left in the second sentence.

The Examiner has indicated that Claims 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 18, and 20-23 would be allowable if written in independent form (while Claim 18 has been indicated as allowable, Claim 18 has also been indicated as rejected under 35 USC 102). Claims 5, 15, and 21 have been written in independent form so should be allowable. Claim 9 has been written in independent form, but does not include the limitation of Claim 8 that the “at least one cross member is padded”, nor does it include the limitation from Claim 1 that the coupling means allow “movement of one frame in relation to the other frame to relieve stress between frames.” It appears that Claim 9 was indicated as allowable based on the limitations of Claim 9. The limitations of Claim 8 that the cross member is padded and the limitation of Claim 1 that the coupling means allow movement of one frame in relation to the other frame to relieve stress between frames does not appear to be required for patentability of Claim 9. Claim 9 should be allowable.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 6, 7, 16-19, 24, and 25 under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Nissen Patent No. 3,339,925. Nissen shows a trampoline with end attachments that slope upwardly and a frame that supports a net centered with respect to the rebound surface of the trampoline. Applicant has amended Claims 1, 24, and 25 to recite that the flexible material substantially entirely surrounds the individual play areas. This is clearly shown in applicant’s drawings. This is important for applicant’s apparatus so that the play object, such as a ball, is maintained within the play areas and does not leave the play areas so that a player has to dismount the trampoline to retrieve the object. Nissen does not show or suggest completely surrounding his play areas and just provides the backboards for the

ball. The ball or other play object could easily leave the play area. Since Nissen does not show his flexible material substantially entirely surrounding the play areas as now required by Claims 1, 24, and 25, Nissen cannot anticipate such claims.

The Examiner has also rejected Claims 1 and 7, as well as Claims 8, 13, and 14 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Nissen Patent No. 3,201,126 in view of Laseman et al. (Form PTO-892, Notice of References Cited, cites Vensel Richard R Patent No. 3,201,125 rather than Nissen Patent No. 3,201,126. This should be corrected so that the correct patent is indicated in the record as being cited). This Nissen patent, similarly to the Nissen Patent No. 3,339,925 cited for the 102 rejection, does not show or suggest substantially entirely surrounding the play areas with the flexible material. Further, Lesserman et al. do not have separate play areas. Lesserman et al. have two small trampolines spaced so that a user places a foot on each trampoline and then jumps from one foot on one trampoline to the other foot on the other trampoline. Lesserman et al. could not have flexible material surrounding either trampoline. Flexible material surrounding either trampoline would interfere with a user having one foot on one trampoline and the other foot on the other trampoline. The Examiner argues that Lesserman et al. suggest using a sleeve to mount the flexible material frame to the rebound surface mounting frame. However, Lesserman et al. are merely connecting the two trampolines together with the smaller tube 36 inserted inside of the larger tubes 30, and use the tube arrangement to adjust the spacing of the trampolines. This is more of a telescoping arrangement than a sleeve arrangement. This does not suggest the use of sleeves for coupling a flexible material mounting frame to either of Lesserman et al.'s trampoline frames, nor does it suggest the use of sleeves for coupling Nissen's gantry or barrier 50 to Nissen's trampoline frame. Claims 1, 7, 13, and 14, are not made obvious by Nissen or by Nissen in combination with Lesserman et al.

Four additional independent claims, i.e., Claims 5, 9, 15, and 21 written in independent form, and six additional claims over 20, i.e., Claims 26-31, have been added. Please charge additional fees due, or deposit any overpayments, to Deposit Account No. 20-0100 of the undersigned.

Dated this 23rd day of April, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert R. Mallinckrodt", written in a cursive style.

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Enclosures